

**ELECTRICAL BOARD MEETING**  
**Summary Minutes**  
**October 27, 2005**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Gloria Ashford, Vice Chair Jim Simmons, Philip Parker, Lea Wilson, Tom Phillips, Don Kopczynski, Fred Tricarico, Gloria Ashford, David A. Bowman, David S. Bowman, David Jacobsen, Geoffrey Newman, Tracy Prezeau, Don Guillot, Dave Gough, and Secretary/Chief Electrical Inspector Ronald Fuller. Member not present: Mike Hendrix.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Item 1            Approve Minutes of July 28, 2005, Electrical Board Meeting**

The July 28, 2005, meeting minutes for the Electrical Board were approved as written.

**Item 2            Welcome New Members**

Dave Gough and Don Guillot were introduced and welcomed to the Board.

**Item 3            Introduce Electrical Inspectors and Board**

Ron Fuller talked about the unique opportunity for the 136 electrical inspectors to attend this meeting to meet the Board members and see what they do (e.g. oversight of the electrical budget, rules and hearing of appeals). This also allowed the Board to see how many inspectors there are.

**Item 4            Department Update**

Patrick Woods expressed the department's appreciation for the Board members commitment to working together and the dedication to the electrical industry. Patrick also introduced Director Gary Weeks. Director Weeks told the Board about himself; how he lived in Oregon for 30 years and ran four different agencies under four different governors. He talked about his meetings with Governor Gregoire where he learned of her personal commitment and seriousness about making Washington state government more responsive to the people. He said he was very excited about the opportunity to work with her as head of L&I. Director Weeks expressed his appreciation to the Board members for their hard work and sacrifice to serve the state as members of the Electrical Board. He talked about the roles of the department and the Board, while working together in making decisions that are supportive of the electrical industry.

Director Weeks talked about the hard and continually increasing work that the electrical inspectors do and the high expectations that they handle daily. He discussed the fact that the inspector's workload has increased roughly 30 percent in the last four years without any additional resources and that he supports the department requesting additional resources from the legislature. This support is based on the condition that the electrical program look at the work that they do today and in making sure that it is being done in the most effective way and that the work we are doing actually should be done. He wants to be sure that the department is not wasting time on things that are not high risk or high potential for loss of property or life. The Director asked, "Are we really focusing on the areas where

the greatest risks are?” He also commented that once we have done this it will be much easier to go to the legislature to request additional inspectors, because we can say we have done everything we can and we still need the extra resources.

Director Weeks talked about his expectations for customer service. He expects the department to perform their regulatory jobs with a customer service perspective, to work with the business and labor communities, and to serve the best interest of the public. He said:

- We need to respond to things with a sense of urgency and make quick decisions.
- We need to get the best information we can, talk to all the right people, and make the right decision.
- We should share how a decision was reached because people are more willing to support a decision if they understand how it was reached.

He wants people to think of L&I as an organization that has a high degree of integrity that is effective, that is accountable, and stands behind what we do.

#### **Item 5            Government Management, Accountability and Performance (GMAP)**

Government Management, Accountability and Performance (GMAP) was created by Governor Gregoire as a tool to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of state government. From April to September the Electrical Program participated in the pilot project to phase in GMAP. Some of the primary things to come out of those meetings were the opportunity to evaluate what the electrical program does and ways to become more efficient. From these meetings, it also became apparent: inspectors have an extremely heavy workload, they are not able to keep up their workload, and there is a definite need for more resources. Another item was the department’s executive management support of improving Internet technology for inspectors and their customers.

#### **Item 6            Budget Report**

Ron Fuller mentioned that the electrical fund balance in July 2005 was \$9,651,000. In August 2005 it was \$9,423,000. This decrease was due to a book keeping error. The fund continues to grow and this raises concerns because of the previous removal of funds from the legislature. The fund will probably not continue to increase as much because the Electrical Program is now paying their share of the Department’s administrative overhead costs, the inspectors pay increase, and the rule changes. In addition, the rule changes will add a lot of the low voltage work to Class B electrical work that will reduce revenue from permits.

#### **Item 7            JLARC Report**

The Joint Legislative Audit Review Committee (JLARC) has finalized their report on the HVAC/R study. As mentioned at the July Board meeting there were four items identified in the report:

1. The department should evaluate whether the number of training hours should include electrical only experience. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) made the unanimous recommendation that the status quo be maintained on this issue.

2. The department should clarify how trainee hour requirements are established;
3. The department should evaluate three options recommended in the JLARC report and any others that could make the HVAC/R licensing methods more fair and reasonable;
4. The legislature should consider whether the makeup of the board is appropriate.

The Department must formally respond to JLARC with a plan by December.

## **Item 8          RCW/WAC Update**

Ron Fuller discussed the department sponsored legislation, budget package for eight additional electrical inspector positions, for the Electrical Program. Ron presented the proposed WAC rule revisions for 2006. Motion was made and passed to support the proposed changes to WAC 296-46B with minor corrections suggested by the board.

## **Item 9          Secretary Report**

*October 2005*

### **Revenue Status**

The Electrical Fund balance through August 2005 was \$9,429,642.

### **Customer Service**

In August 2005 the Electrical Program released the new Electrical Permit & Inspection System (EPIS). We experienced a few unanticipated difficulties which caused some initial frustration with the system for both customers and staff. We have either fixed or identified and plan to fix most of the major issues. Internet usage has remained consistent with the new application which is a good indicator that our customers are continuing to use the new system even with the issues. During this past quarter, customers used EPIS to purchase 31,679 permits which is 61% of the permits sold. This is up from the previous quarter which was 28,781 permits sold and 58% and was only to contractors. This past quarter, customers also used EPIS to request 33,332 inspections which is 44% of all request received. This is up from the previous quarter which was 31,532 online inspections requests and 43% off only contractor requests for inspections.

Also, in August 2005, the department began contracting with the City of Auburn to conduct electrical inspection within their city limits. The City of Auburn charges an additional 25% fee in addition to the departments permit fees. So far this system seems to be working well.

### **Rule Revisions**

The department adopted the interim rules that were presented to the Board at the July 2005, meeting and those will become effective November 25, 2005.

The Electrical Technical Advisory Committee met September 20, 2005. The TAC reviewed about 26 proposals. The majority of the proposals were rejected. Those approved were reviewed under agenda item 8 for Board review.

### **Testing Lab Report**

The department has denied one testing labs application and are currently reviewing another.

## **Performance Measures**

<b><u>Electrical Scorecard from July 2005 to September 2005</u></b>	
Goal (Target)	<b><u>State Totals</u></b>
1. Targeted Citations/Region/Quarter	213
2. % Targeted Citations/Total Citations (48%)	46%
3. % Stops <24 hours (82% - dependent upon workload)	83%
4. # of Stops/Inspector Day (workload indicator only)	11.8
5. # of Electrical Disconnect Corrections	13,852
6. At fault vehicle accidents:	2
Miles driven:	739,739

**Electrical Licensing** – The licensing staff is struggling to meet their goal of processing within three days at this time. They are currently down two staff members which is impacting their ability to maintain their goal.

**Electrical Plan Review** – Plan review's workload remains steady but they are still within their goal of less than one month processing time.

**Electrical Examinations** – See the certification report enclosed in the packets.

### **Item 10      Certification Quarterly Report**

Ron Fuller presented the report to the Board and discussed some of the data provided in the report. One area which is of concern to the department is the low pass rate of 23% for the residential specialty. In comparison, there is a higher pass rate, 65%, for the general journeyman exam. It seems that the formal/classroom training that many of the trainees get when qualifying for the general journeyman and specialties like HVAC/R is very beneficial. This formal training is not required for other specialties which could be the cause of the low pass rate for the residential specialty. The department would like to change the electrician exams to be similar to that of the administrator and master electrician exams which have multiple part exams (i.e. Code & Theory in one part and Washington laws and rules in another). This will allow the department to be able to work better with other states sharing exams and saving all states time in exam preparation. A motion was made and passed to support this change.

### **Item 11      Appeals**

#### **11 a      Electro Serve & Gary Jessen**

Lisa Marsh, AAG, represented the department in its appeal of the Administrative Law Judges (ALJ) decision regarding citation #37775 issued to Electro Serve for failure to obtain an electrical work permit prior to performing electrical work. There was no one present to represent Electro Serve. Lisa stated that the ALJ findings clearly showed a violation had occurred, the facts were not in dispute, and the law was violated for failure to obtain a permit. However, the ALJ indicated that the department cited violation of RCW 19.28.101 as opposed to WAC 296-46B-900 therefore the

citation should not stand. The Board issued a Final Order, which reversed the ALJ decision and upheld citation #37775.

Gary Jessen appealed the ALJ decision to uphold the department's citation, #47301, issued to him for failure as the administrator to ensure that Electro Serve took out an electrical permit prior to performing electrical work. There was no one present to represent Gary Jessen. The Board having reviewed the ALJ hearing transcripts and the information submitted with Mr. Jessen's appeal made and passed a motion to uphold the ALJ decision and affirm citation #47301.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.